



JP HISTORY SECTION PAGES 12+13

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Green Line E Branch August closures discussed at public meeting

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The MBTA Green Line Transformation (GLT) team held a public meeting on July 14 to discuss upcoming track work between Brigham Circle and South Huntington Ave. stations.

Angel Pena, Chief of the GLT, said that a year's worth of work will be completed in 28 days for this project, and said that it will include the replacement of

"4,0000 feet of embedded track between the South Huntington curve and Brigham Circle."

The project is expected to commence on August 2, and be completed on August 29.

He said that this work will also include roadway and pavement improvements that will benefit pedestrians, cyclists, and

Continued on page 3

For trainees, Community Servings Teaching Kitchen provides more than just cooking skills

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Teaching Kitchen at Community Servings is back in full swing, with a number of changes from previous years to benefit the program participants.

Community Servings, a JP-based nonprofit that provides medically tailored meals to people with chronic and critical illnesses, offers several programs

Continued on page 16



Jermaine McNeill chops some rosemary. McNeill graduated from the Teaching Kitchen program in 2011, and is now a full time chef at Community Servings.

MOZART PARK PUPPET SHOW



PHOTOS BY SETH DANIEL

A crowd of young children gathered in Mozart Park last Friday morning to catch a glimpse of Rosalita's Puppet Theatre – an annual production in parks all over the city, and a steadfast annual stop in Mozart Park as well. Rosalita the puppet had many different adventures for the kids, including this scene of her interact-ing with a butterfly.

EBT/SNAP benefits expanded to online purchases

BY JOHN LYNDIS

During the height of the pandemic most Jamaica Plain residents were staying home and doing their food shopping from the comfort of their home.

While the online grocery delivery service industry exploded because many were not comfortable venturing into crowded grocery stores, it exposed a significant inequity for those who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Many who received benefits found that many online food shopping services lacked the ability to checkout online and pay using their SNAP/EBT cards, especially on grocery de-

Continued on page 2

School Police quietly phased out from all BPS schools

Without arrest powers, they will be known as Office of Safety Services

BY SETH DANIEL

Though very few know, the long-standing Boston School Police have been phased out this month, losing their arrest powers and most other powers on July 1

due to the state Police Reform Act – and they will now be known as the Office of Safety Services and are forming a new mission over the summer.

The Boston School Police have been in place for several decades, and are a force that is in effect under the Rule 400 process that allows Special Police Officers (SPOs). While they are not armed and were instituted as a mediation group to keep

regular Boston Police out of the schools, Boston School Police had arrest powers and could carry handcuffs and produce Police Reports – and also remove those trespassing on school grounds. With little fanfare, all SPOs under the state Police Reform Act lost their police powers on July 1 when the law went into effect and the Boston Police could no longer

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Jamaica Plain's annual Porch Festival returns as a two-day festival Aug. 21-22

STAFF REPORT

Jamaica Plain's Annual Porchfest will return this year, with some changes from past years. In an effort to maintain safety protocols and reduce large crowds, this year's Porchfest will span two days from August 21-22 from 11 am-4 pm on each day throughout the central neighborhoods of Jamaica Plain. In addition to the new two day festival format, virtual streaming options have been introduced for the main porches on both days as well as "JP Couchfest," a pre-recorded performance series held the week counting down to the festival for performers who aren't able to be in person this year. With all of these options, there has never been a better year to get your Porchfest on!

Some things haven't changed. This year's festival will still be a celebration of the cultural and artistic diversity of JP, and still honors the community spirit that drives folks to open up their homes to strangers. However, this year, the festival's focus on highlighting our local BIPOC community will be strengthened, so not only will BIPOC artists and creatives be spotlighted and centered, performers will also be compensated for the first time! This is a small but necessary step towards valuing the artists and creatives that make our community so rich in culture.

"Dunamis' mission – to ignite agency and transformative growth for emerging artist and arts-managers of color - aligns really well with the JP Porchfest's mission of celebrating the

creative talent and diversity of JP and beyond, using the arts as a vehicle to weave together the community across the divides of race, class, culture and immigrant status," said Marie Ghitman, Co-producer of Jamaica Plain Porchfest

What can you expect at Porchfest this year?

Performances all over Jamaica Plain on porches, driveways, front yards and more.

Porches curated by community partners: CulturalAgora, Brain Arts Org, Urbano Project, CEI and Meraki

Beer Garden sponsored by Sam Adams Brewery at 30 Germania St, Boston, MA 02130, United States.

This is a free festival open to all. Couchfest performances will

be shared throughout the week leading up to the festival, and main stage porches will be live-streamed the day of the festival!

"We are so excited that JP Porchfest was and continues to be embraced as a Jamaica Plain tradition. And we feel huge excitement and gratitude that our friends at Dunamis will be producing this festival," said Mindy Fried and Marie Ghitman, JP Porchfest Founders.

Dunamis ignites agency and transformative growth for emerging artists and arts-managers of color by serving as a nexus for professional development, community-building, consultation, production, advocacy and developing equitable pipelines for access and leadership in creative spaces, it is an honor for us to take the reins to produce JP

Porchfest 2021!

We are proud and excited to announce our main sponsor for JP Porchfest 2021, Sam Adams Boston Brewery. Sam Adams is committed to hosting a porch and providing a robust beer garden experience on both festival days! Porchfest is also proudly sponsored by Hoopla Productions, Mass Cultural Council, National Art Strategies and Ellen + Janis Real Estate Team. Without the support of these organizations, Porchfest would cease to exist.

"We are thrilled to sponsor this unique neighborhood event that highlights JP's cultural and artistic diversity. We cannot think of a better way to build community together," said Ellen Grubert and Janis Lippman of the Ellen + Janis Real Estate Team.

EBT/SNAP

Continued from page 1

livery platforms like Instacart.

This week, the Baker-Polito Administration closed that loophole and announced that residents who receive SNAP/EBT

benefits can use their cards to buy fresh food and pantry staples online from a variety of participating stores for same-day delivery and pickup via Instacart, including Price Chopper, ALDI and newly added Stop & Shop and Hannaford. Walmart and Amazon are also federally

approved SNAP online retailers in the state.

Massachusetts first launched the SNAP online purchasing program on May 29, 2020. To date, Massachusetts residents have spent over \$75 million in SNAP benefits in online grocery purchases across retailers. Similar to using SNAP/EBT benefits to purchase food in a store, benefits can be used to buy SNAP-eligible foods online, including fresh produce, frozen foods, dairy and eggs.

"SNAP online purchasing is one of several tools the Administration has employed, alongside the state's national leadership in Pandemic EBT and continuation of SNAP Emergency Allotments, to combat food insecurity for Massachusetts individuals and families," said Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders. "SNAP remains an important tool as we start to

recover from the public health crisis by putting money to buy healthy food directly into the hands of hundreds of thousands of households and supporting our local communities."

The Department of Transitional Assistance Commissioner Amy Kershawa said as a result of the economic fallout of COVID-19, the state has seen a historic increase in SNAP participation, with 100,000 more households now utilizing the program for a total of approximately 550,000 households.

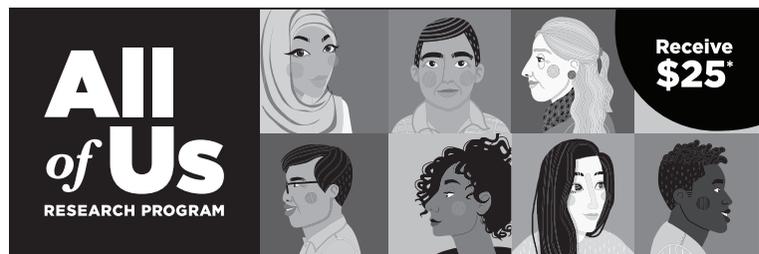
"Massachusetts has heavily invested in IT changes and maximized federal flexibilities to make it easier than ever to apply for SNAP and conduct convenient business with the agency 24/7 online and over the phone," she said. "In addition to these changes, SNAP online purchasing is another tool bringing greater equity to how residents can utilize SNAP."

Residents can shop for groceries from Stop & Shop, Hannaford, Price Chopper and ALDI via the Instacart online site and mobile app. Once an Instacart customer profile is created, customers can enter their EBT SNAP card information as a form of payment. Customers can enter their zip code to determine if they are near a participating retailer, and begin shopping for retailers' EBT-eligible products.

Once items are added to their cart, customers will be able to select how much of their benefits they would like to allocate to the order. Orders for delivery and pickup can be placed by customers for receipt in as fast as an hour or scheduled several days in advance.

To help subsidize costs for SNAP/EBT participants, Instacart will waive delivery or pickup fees through September 16, 2021, on up to the first three orders for each customer with a valid EBT card associated with their Instacart account. For more information on EBT SNAP on Instacart, visit: <https://www.instacart.com/ebt-snap>.

"Providing people access to the food they love is at the core of Instacart's mission. We're proud to partner with Price Chopper, ALDI and now Hannaford and Stop & Shop to provide more families in Massachusetts with a convenient and accessible way to get their fresh food and pantry staples," said David Healy, Retail Partnerships at Instacart. "Expanding EBT SNAP to reach same-day online grocery delivery and pickup is important to help people access the food they need, and we look forward to expanding this payment integration to even more retailers across Massachusetts."



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Green line

Continued from page 1

motorists as well.

According to the presentation, a “28-day full-access closure is more efficient than one year of weekend diversions or night work,” and will allow for better safety at the site and gets rid of the need to continually set up and break down the construction area.

The team also said that they have “worked closely with the City of Boston and other stakeholders as we prepare to carry out this work.”

MBTA Senior Project Manager Desiree Patrice said that the team has spoken to the contractors to create and distribute signage for businesses impacted by the construction. The signs will let patrons know that businesses are still open during the construction.

GLT Senior Director Ben Frison said that there will be about two weeks of prep work before the construction starts, which will help to “minimize disruptions and impacts on the community.”

He said construction will occur in three different parts, beginning with the section from South Huntington Ave. to Frawley St., then Mission Park Dr. To Fenwood Rd., then the Tremont St. intersection. He also said that there will be a return to the second section to finish up.

GLT Project Manager Gwen Dunlevy added that prep work will commence from St. Albans Rd. to the Mission Park Garage.

She also talked about the “typical work zone,” which includes a contractor taking over the center lanes of road to replace the track and repave the road. There will be one lane in each direction to allow cars and buses to travel, and no parking at any time will be allowed along the work zone.

Frison said that there has been “advance coordination” with the local businesses regarding the work, and there have been in-person meetings with busi-

ness owners in the Brigham Circle area as well.

He said that following conversations with business owners, the work plan had been changed to reflect the desire of reducing the impact of construction on the businesses. The original plan called for 18 days of work that would impact outdoor seating for local restaurants, but that has since been reduced to seven days, after which the outdoor seating will be restored.

Frison also said that members of the GLT team will be available daily on site to respond to concerns from local residents during the construction.

Dunlevy then talked about minimizing noise disruption in the neighborhood. The presentation states that “the loudest work will occur when crews cut rails with a saw and tamp the track to proper elevation.”

According to a slide presented, noise mitigation efforts include “using self-adjusting backup alarms, silencers or mufflers on equipment,” as well as other efforts to minimize noise such as noise blankets and “sound-deadening” material in bins and hoppers.

Dunlevy also spoke about the traffic management plan, which will include warning signs to de-tour traffic from construction, a police detail for emergency access, and U-turns will be permitted at the Longwood intersection with a police detail.

Pedestrian access will remain with crosswalks at either end of the work area, and there will be officers on hand to help pedestrians cross the street at every intersection.

Alternative service to the Green Line from Health St. to Brigham Circle will be offered on the 39 bus free of charge, and service on that line will be more frequent during the construction period.

Patrice said that more than 4,000 subscribers were emailed with information about this project, and details about it are available on the MBTA GLT webpage.

Pena added that the website is updated regularly, and the

team can be reached via email at glt@mbta.com. Additionally, there is a 24/7 noise hotline available for residents to call during the construction period. The number for the hotline is 508-676-3517.

One of the owners of Penguin Pizza said that he “found out on the 7th of July that we’re going to be losing our outdoor seating,” and that there was “no compensation for losing it.”

He said he feels that the process has not been fair and that restaurant owners have not had enough time to “object.”

He said that the team did meet with business owners, but some asked if the project could be done at a different time, and not when students are coming back to the neighborhood.

“Presently, 70 percent of our business is outdoor seating,” he said, adding that he believes the project should happen in “October or November when there is more stability in our economy.”

He said that while he recognizes the importance of the work, he does not approve of the process and the way it is being done.

“We understand that this is a very difficult decision,” said Nancy Farrell of the GLT team.

Dunlevy said that this project is being done in the summer and not the fall because “this is the time period where we have lowest ridership,” and it is also when there is the lowest recorded vehicle traffic in the area.

“We’re glad that we were able to reduce the impacts of that lo-

cal area from 18 to 7 days,” Frison said. He said that the team recognizes that this work “is tough on local businesses, especially coming out of COVID.”

Farrell added that a letter is being written to express “the commitment for only seven days of impact on outdoor seating.”

Others also had concerns about the effect of the construction on local businesses, accessibility during construction, and other issues. The full video and slideshow from the meeting can be found at mbta.com/events/2021-07-14/public-meeting-green-line-transformation-glt-e-branch-track-and-intersection.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to GLT@mbta.com.

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JP OBSERVER

JPNDC raising funds to create Center for Equity and Prosperity for Boston families

BY SANDRA STOREY / SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

BY SANDRA STOREY

Known mostly for creating jobs and affordable housing in the Jamaica Plain area for the past 44 years, the JP Neighborhood Development Corporation's (JPNDC) current strategic plan calls for going deeper and wider to increase services it provides to Boston families.

The nonprofit's "Capital Campaign for Equity and Prosperity" is in full swing to provide more families with the tools to overcome a notorious wealth divide in the U.S. as it exists in their lives in Boston.

Highlights of the creative 2019-2023 strategic plan, linked to jpndc.org, describe huge asset disparities here between white people and people of color: "The most sobering data to many of us was provided in 2016 by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, which reported a 'staggering' wealth gap between white households (\$247,000) and households of color (\$8 for African-Americans, \$0 for Dominicans) in our metropolitan area."

Key to the JPNDC's goal is to "put thousands of Boston families on a trajectory of upward financial mobility" the highlights say. To do this, JPNDC provides families with career, credit and consumer counseling. It also helps small businesses,

including small construction contractors, grow. Third, JPNDC supports early childhood education by doing the administrative work, including handling registrations, for about 45 family day care centers in the area.

"A lot of people are talking these days about the wealth divide's root causes," JPNDC Communications and Fundraising Director Sally Swenson said in an interview last week. "We know JPNDC can't pretend to change the structure. We take a family-by-family approach."

People often come in with a short-term goal, like buying a home, Swenson said. After addressing that, staff members help with careers and credit ratings and other more long-term improvements to make their families more financially secure into the future. "Otherwise, they are just handing poverty to their children," Swenson said.

In order to serve the increasing number of struggling families who are seeking its services, JPNDC needs to build out 6,000 square feet of child friendly space in The Brewery, which it owns. Plans are to put the direct service programs in a "Center for Equity and Prosperity" that will occupy the ground floor of the building. Offices will be on the second floor. The built out and renovated first floor space will include a "welcoming" reception

area featuring a family-friendly play space, training space and a technology area with computers and printers.

The local Community Development Corporation (CDC) capital campaign is raising funds to create the Center and obtain furniture and equipment. So far, 230 separate donations, including one from the Community Preservation Act, have brought in 53 percent of the necessary \$2,500,000. The sooner the rest comes in, the sooner JPNDC can expand its services for more Boston residents who need them.

Meanwhile, of course, JPNDC will continue to work to add to the 1,1117 affordable housing units it has developed around the neighborhood, "building green" each time. It will also continue to oversee commercial spaces leased primarily by women and people of color. The historic Brewery has 50 commercial tenants on five acres of renovated buildings that make it "Boston's largest small business complex." JPNDC also manages 10 commercial spaces in Hyde and Jackson Squares.

Community organizing is one of JPNDC's ongoing efforts. "The results are better when the people affected are involved," its website states and gives examples.

JPNDC says it will remain a partner to residents of Mildred Hailey Apartments, as a "key

part of a revitalized Jackson Square."

The strategic plan also looks inward, according to the highlights document, stating JPNDC's "commitment to utilizing a racial equity lens to examine all aspects of our organization, set clear goals and measure progress, and continue devoting resources to anti-racism training. Targeted areas of focus will include governance, hiring, and communications."

Not long ago, it would have been unusual to see a CDC like JPNDC offering programs that serve all of Boston. CDCs have traditionally stuck to projects in their neighborhoods.

As the neighborhoods themselves have changed, that practice needs to be modified, too. According to the strategic plan highlights, in 2018 only 11 percent of families the nonprofit served lived outside JP. But word spread about the family prosperity programs the JPNDC offered, and people from other Boston neighborhoods wanted to participate, Swenson said.

The "explosion" of high-priced development in JP is "shutting JPNDC out of development opportunities," according to the plan highlights. "...we must look outside the neighborhood," it says. JPNDC is trying to avoid competition with other CDCs and nonprofits and, instead,

seeks "cooperation."

"...gentrification has significantly changed the demographics of our home neighborhood," the plan highlights say. "Yet in large part because of [JPNDC and others'] efforts to create and preserve affordable housing, households earning below \$50,000 a year still make up nearly one-third of the population of JP."

"JP folks have been fantastic and supportive" of the JPNDC focus on equity and prosperity for people who have few assets" Swenson said. "People—new and older residents—understand their role in gentrification and want to give back," she said.

Despite JPNDC's work with families from other neighborhoods, "JP is number one" Swenson said. "We are committed to Jamaica Plain."

For more information about the strategic plan for Equity and Prosperity and JPNDC itself, see jpndc.org or call 617-522-2424. With questions about the capital campaign for Equity and Prosperity, contact Randi Sayers at rsayers@jpndc.org 617-522-2424 x256. Send an email to prosperityservices@jpndc.org to request a virtual appointment for financial coaching, job search, early childhood education services or small business assistance.

Boston Public Schools releases draft of three-year federal funding plan

STAFF REPORT

Boston Public Schools (BPS) Superintendent Brenda Cassellius this week released the first draft of the district's plan to distribute Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief II (ESSER II) federal funding.

The funding, approximately \$400 million over the next three years, will provide opportunities to support the Return, Recover, and Reimagine agenda to return students safely to classrooms; recover from the pandemic and create the conditions for reimagining BPS; and reimagine a sustained, successful and equitable district. The one-time funding

will also further support the district's implementation of the five-year strategic plan.

The ESSER funding plan was developed and informed over the past three months through a robust community process that engaged students, families, teachers, staff, and the larger Boston community. The plan outlines how 100% of funding will be utilized to support stronger student outcomes. The plan ensures that the first 50% of funding is invested directly to schools; the next 30% will go to schools via school department investments; and the final 20% will be allocated to fund districtwide innovation, collaboration and community partnerships.

"This federal funding represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for us to dismantle systemic barriers to opportunity that have persisted in the Boston Public Schools for far too long. I am so thankful to all the many stakeholders who contributed the ideas that you see reflected in this plan," said Superintendent Cassellius. "We are utilizing this ESSER funding as a continuous improvement strategy, directing funds to sustainable investments which will allow us to boldly confront the hard work ahead and achieve our goal of providing every student in every neighborhood with access to an excellent education in a high-quality

school."

The funding is expected in three rounds and the first round of \$55 million was already used in 2020 to return to school safely. Other rounds include:

- ESSER II - Recover lost learning and wellness: \$123 million.
- ESSER III - Reimagine BPS for a sustained strong and equitable system: \$276 million.

ESSER II funding, totaling approximately \$123 million, and ESSER III funding totaling approximately \$276 million, have not yet been received from the state. The draft plan released is specific to the ESSER II funding expected this fall. BPS will continue engagement on ESSER III

funding through the fall.

Superintendent Cassellius and her team solicited feedback from students, families, teachers, local leaders, and the general public as part of an engagement process. BPS is also launching a student commission for rising 10th, 11th and 12th graders to share their thoughts as to how the ESSER III funding should be spent. Meetings will be held this summer beginning Thursday, July 22.

The plan will be available for public comment until July 30 at which time BPS will make final revisions based on feedback before submitting the plan to the state.



THINGS

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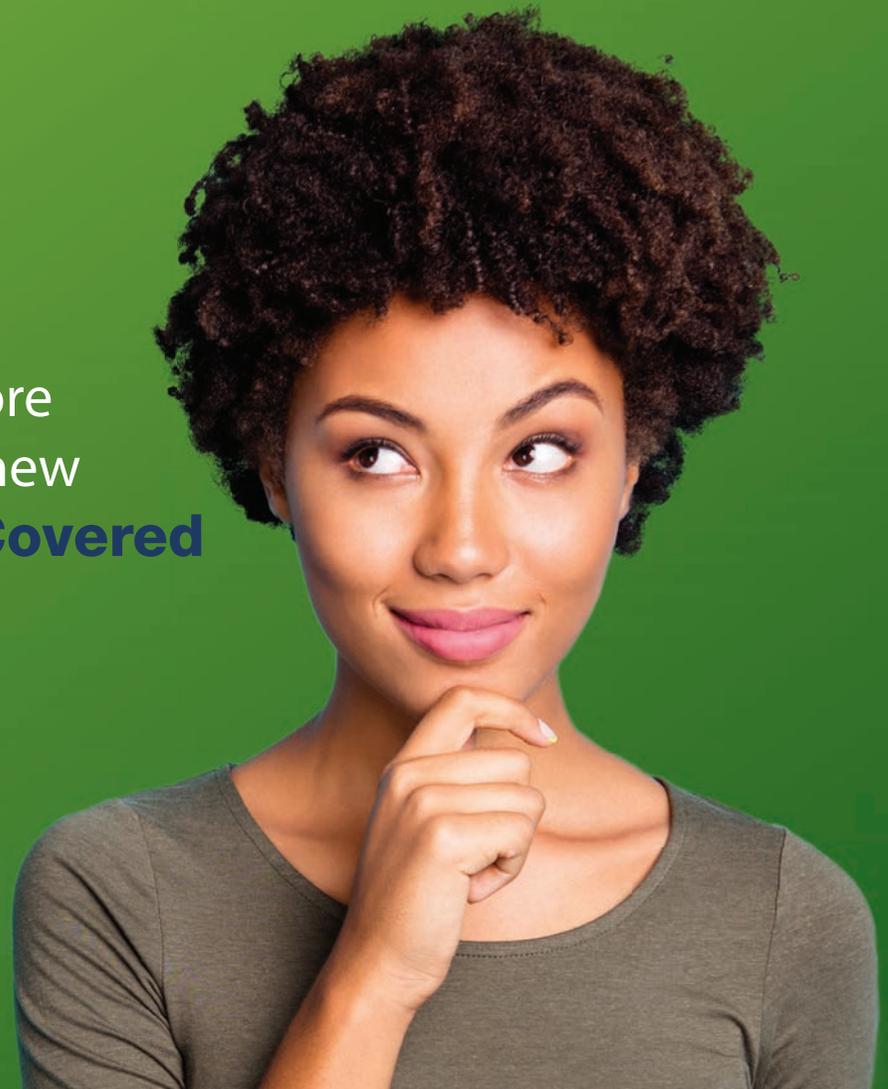
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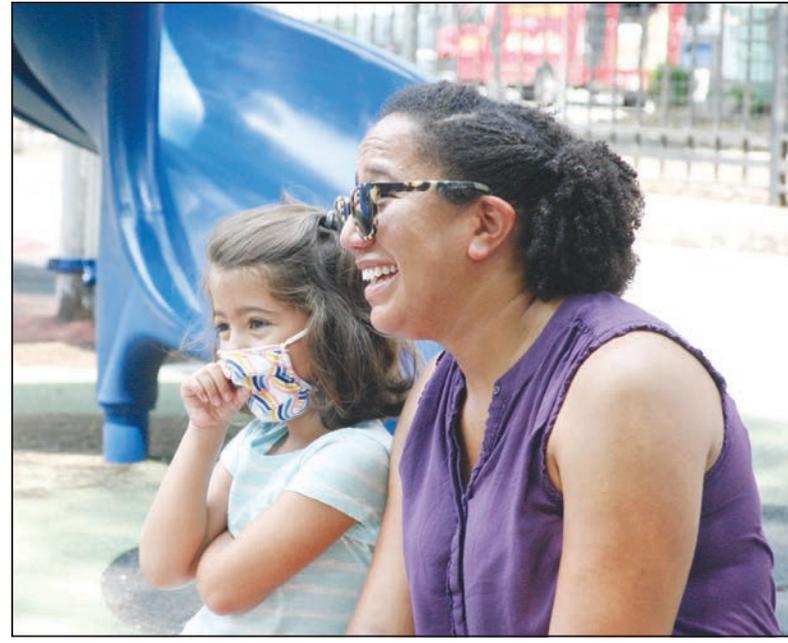
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ROSALITA'S PUPPET THEATER WOWS AT MOZART PARK

PHOTOS BY SETH DANIEL

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department brought back to Mozart Park on Friday, July 16, its annual Arts & Crafts workshop – as well as a performance from Rosalita's Puppet Shows. The craft days in the park are always a highlight, and Rosalita has made a habit – except for last year during COVID-19 lockdowns – to stop in JP at Mozart Park.



Shown above, Camille and Eliot Hanson enjoyed the puppet show from a shady spot by the slide. Shown to the left, Rosalita walked and talked all morning, delighting the children gathered for the show – which included caterpillars, spiders and a butterfly.



James Vanroy was captivated by the caterpillar on Friday.

The Arts & Crafts workshop will return to Mozart Park on Fridays, July 23 and July 30, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Rosalita won't be coming back to JP, but she can be seen again at Fallon Field in Roslindale on Tuesday, Aug. 10.

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ROSALITA'S PUPPET THEATER WOWS AT MOZART PARK



Rosalita brought a high-flying bee to life for the kids at Mozart Park last Friday, July 16.



Rachel Akiba and Liorah Sherman were helped by the Parks Department's Eliza Mecklenberg at the arts and crafts table.



Little Liana Pearlstein-Ash clapped loudly for the puppet show at Mozart Park.



Joe and Moses Tampton had a great time checking out Rosalita's story.

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*** Net effective rent with 2 months free factored in. Actual rent \$1950-\$2050/month.



BSSCC

A Community of Early Learners

An established, high quality early education program now located minutes from JP, alongside Lars Anderson Park, has preschool openings.

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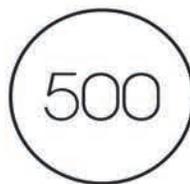


BACK TO THE BEACH!



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Jamaica Plain COVID infections spike

By JOHN LYNDIS

Throughout June and the beginning of July COVID infections were virtually nonexistent in the neighborhood with no residents testing positive for the virus in Jamaica Plain week after week.

However, with new variants of the virus penetrating the US Jamaica Plain is not immune to the recent spikes in cases that are sweeping the US and infecting unvaccinated people with vengeance.

According to the weekly report released last Friday released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), 813 Jamaica Plain residents were tested last week and 2.7 percent were found to be positive. This was the first time the number of residents

testing positive spiked above 1 percent in a few months.

Of the 38,510 Jamaica Plain residents tested for COVID since the pandemic began, 7.6 percent overall were found to be positive—this was a 1.3 percentage decrease from the 7.7 percent reported by the BPHC on June 18.

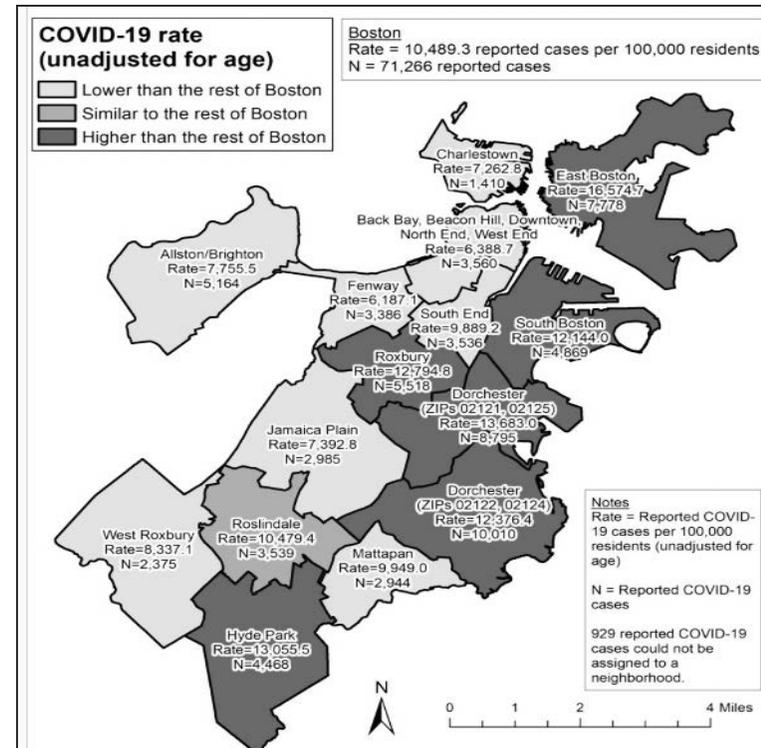
Citywide, the weekly positive test rate increased. According to the BPHC 11,704 residents were tested and 1.5 percent were COVID positive—this was a 275 percent increase from the 0.4 percent reported by the BPHC a few weeks ago.

According to the BPHC data, Jamaica Plain's infection rate increased roughly 1 percent since June 18 and went from 732.3 cases per 10,000 residents to 739.2 cases per 10,000 residents.

Twenty-eight additional Jamaica Plain residents became infected with COVID-19 since June 18 and the number of total cases here went from 2,957 cases to 2,985 cases in the neighborhood.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 0.6 percent since July 9 and went from 70,998 cases to 71,519 confirmed cases in a week. Two additional Boston residents died from the virus in the past two weeks and there are now 1,395 total deaths in the city from COVID.



On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 stats by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

BPS police

Continued from page 1

license them. One of the largest forces to lose their powers were the Boston School Police, but other Rule 400 SPOs that lost their powers were hospital police forces like the Boston Medical Center Police, private companies like Longwood Security, Boston Common Park Rangers and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) Police, among others.

Few are talking about the changes, which have already been put into place, and current and former SPOs estimated that around 400 officers lost their powers in Boston.

Boston Public Schools (BPS) said it had been working on a plan to implement the Office of Safety Services and to phase out the Boston School Police since May. They said Supt. Brenda Cassellius mentioned it in her report on May 12 and June 16 – and Supt. Cassellius addressed the matter again at the July 14 meeting. However, it has not been well-publicized and it appears parents have not been informed officially of the change yet.

“BPS is committed to providing safe, welcoming and culturally affirming environments for our students and staff,” read a statement from the schools. “Since September 2019, Superintendent Cassellius and her team

have been working to address student safety policies that have adversely impacted students in our schools. A key component of this work is the new student data privacy policy that was approved in September 2020.

“The Governor’s new law accelerated the work BPS is already doing to reimagine the role of the Office of Safety Services,” it continued. “The ultimate goal of this ongoing work is to promote school safety while cultivating trust in the community, building strong relationships, and placing a greater focus on intervention and restorative justice practices.”

BPS said the Police Reform Act impacted the ability of local police, in this case the Boston Police Department (BPD), to issue police licenses to SPOs like the Boston School Police patrolmen and superior officers. The change in the law removed their authority to make arrests, and write/access police reports. Now, in the event that police are needed, BPS said it will be calling Boston Police to respond instead of the School Police.

Those on the School Police are now known as Safety Services, and they now wear polo shirts and not police uniforms, and soon will no longer have cruisers or carry handcuffs. They also cannot generate or access police reports. BPS said they have been meeting with Safety Services staff over the summer to develop a plan that promotes school safety through relationship building

and intervention strategies that are not dependent on officers having police powers. The district also said the relationships built by officers over the years will provide a foundation for the Safety Services to move to their next phase of work, being mentors, coaches and valued members of the school community.

Boston Police Department officials did not wish to comment on the School Police situation or the SPO situation in general.

Ames Stevens is a former Boston School Police officer and the former vice president of their union. He quit the force when the changes came down, and entered the regular Police Academy to become an officer on another force in Boston. Stevens had also worked for Longwood Security as an SPO for many years, and said he wouldn’t have left either job had there not been the changes.

He said the changes in the School Police and for other SPOs were abrupt and he doesn’t agree with them.

“That was our big gripe is that it was done so abruptly and so quickly,” he said. “Parents and staff and families should know and I don’t think they do. They’ve been trying to move away from the police in the schools. There are ways for them to get us certified and retain police powers, but they didn’t want to entertain that because it meant sending us to an academy...It was perfect for them because they were looking for this anyway. This law

allowed them to do this quickly and quietly. This was a two-year plan and when the law passed and the date was July 1, it made that two-year plan into a two-month plan.”

Current School Police Union President Ian Maclean said they are left with little to no power, and he said now all they can do is call the Boston Police when something happens and, with BPD being understaffed, hope that they respond. He recalls breaking his leg and hand at English High School in Jamaica Plain when trying to remove a firearm from a young adult that had trespassed from outside, and noted there would be little he could do about that now.

“I took the gun from the kid and basically let him go to remove him,” he said. “I don’t know how that would play out now. We don’t have the authority to do much. We can’t even remove someone trespassing or deal with an external threat, which worries me the most. Even with external threats, we can’t even move people out of the property now. The only thing we can do is call for someone to help. Five minutes go by before a response, if that, and that’s five minutes of people getting their butt kicked or worse... We don’t even have the authority to tell people to move that are sleeping or loitering on school property. It’s a real mistake.”

Stevens said it also undermines the reason the School Police were brought in to the

schools many years ago – as a diversionary force that could protect the school and also mediate situations to give kids a break and potentially avoid an unnecessary arrest. Now, he said, the whole idea of mediating situations will be thrown out the door if BPD shows up and has to arrest kids without the understanding or relationships.

“Now, all they can do is call 9-1-1 and hope that the call is prioritized and then the Boston Police come in,” he said. “We had relationships and we handled a lot of situations. The BPD won’t come in with those relationships. Do you really want street cops coming in with guns? That’s the last thing I would have thought...We could keep street cops out of the schools by handling and mediating things ourselves. An arresting officer has discretion and we could keep things in house and maybe not bring charges if we felt it’s not the best thing. Now you don’t have that. If there’s any crime, they have to call 9-1-1.”

At the July 14 School Committee meeting, Cassellius said they are working through the summer to define the new role of the Office of School Safety, and noted that officers look very nice in their new attire. She said the School Safety is participating in the summer programming to begin building new relationships and to begin going in a new direction in securing the schools.

JPA hears neighbors' concerns with dogs at First Church in JP burying ground

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Jamaica Pond Association (JPA) met virtually on July 12, where members and neighbors discussed an issue around people using the historic cemetery at the First Church in Jamaica Plain Unitarian Universalist as a dog park.

Resident Bonnie McBride raised the issue with the JPA, saying that as a direct abutter to the burial ground, for years she has observed the area being used for such things as children's art programs, and as a spot to read or eat lunch, "exactly what you would expect at a historic burial ground," she said.

McBride said that about two and a half years ago, new signs were installed that informed residents that the grounds were closed from dusk to dawn, and that dogs must remain leashed at all times.

"As of about 18 months ago, the burial ground began unfortunately to be used as a dog park," McBride said, and "more and more what I call 'free range dogs' were loose in the burial ground."

She said that sometimes there are "up to 10-12 dogs racing about the burial ground during the day," but there are usually fewer than that. She said the dogs urinate on gravestones, plants are torn up, and feces is not picked up from neighbors' yards. Additionally, she said the dogs "bark and occasionally fight with one another."

McBride said that "I have great empathy with the dog owners," adding that a dog park is absolutely needed in the neighborhood, but she does not believe a location like this that is so close to residential yards is the appropriate place for one.

She said two other neighbors have shared her concerns, and they got in touch with folks at the First Church who deal with maintenance of the burial ground.

On June 4, she said that she and her neighbor met with people from the church to speak about the dogs.

"It became quite apparent from our conversation that there is a quid pro quo relationship in place between the local dog owners," she said, "in return for occa-

sional yard work and donations to the church. She said a sign is now up asking for donations to the church.

"In return, we learned the church was considering installing a fenced-in dog run" that would run north to south through the burial ground.

She said that she and her neighbors asked to meet with the Governing Board at the church before a final decision is made.

This issue sparked a lengthy conversation between members of the JPA and the community.

JPA member Martin Thompson said that he does "have some sympathy for trying to raise revenue in any way possible through use of the facility," though he did add that he is "not a huge fan of dogs in a residential neighborhood..."

JPA member Kevin Moloney said he was not a fan of the church trying to raise funds in this manner.

JPA member David Moir said he agreed with Moloney, and that JP does need a proper dog park.

"Dog parks are important," he said. "The mental health benefits of dogs are totally uncontested," but he did add that he believes

FIRST CHURCH SEEKS INPUT



The Governing Board of First Church in Jamaica Plain Unitarian Universalist invites the community to a listening session on Thursday, July 29 at 7 pm. The purpose of the meeting will be to solicit community feedback on community use of our burying ground. Please join us as we cultivate community and gather information for the Governing Board to utilize going forward. The meeting will be held and moderated on Zoom, will be recorded for internal use only, and will last until 8PM. If you have questions about this meeting or have feedback on this issue but will not be able to make the meeting, please email community@firstchurchjp.org. The Zoom room is accessible at: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/93032330643>

places like the historic burial ground "should be respected as such."

JPA member Michael Reiskind said that there is an "informal one (dog park) on the Southwest Corridor off Oakdale that is used pretty successfully." He also said that dog owners have "used the Eliot School area as a dog park for many years," but were told to stop, so that "created a new demand for using the burial ground."

JPA member Franklyn Salimbene said that there are "health issues" and this is also a "historical issue." He said he believes that the "church should not feel like it can do whatever it wants."

Kay Mathews, who is a member of the JPA and also of the First Church of Jamaica Plain, said that the focus for the JPA should be on helping to find a location to site a proper dog park.

"These are good people," she said, adding that "there is an ongoing discussion" between different people in the church.

"I think it would be great if there were a way to have a collective meeting around this issue."

JPA Chair Rosemary Jones said she is "sympathetic to what Kay is saying and to Bonnie and her cohorts."

Moloney suggested writing a letter saying that the JPA wants to meet "with appropriate officials of the church to discuss the concerns that the abutters, that we as an organization have."

He continued, "we need to support the folks who live close by who don't want it to continue."

JPA member Martin Thomp-

son said that "we would be acting without any other representation from the other party. I have an issue with that. Typically we hear both sides."

Mathews said that nothing is set in stone yet from the church's perspective. "They're taking about it; they're trying to figure out what they can do to be good neighbors."

In the end, the JPA voted to write a letter to church officials saying that members of the JPA discussed issues with the dog park that were brought up by abutters, and that Mathews will act as a person of contact for McBride and her neighbors, which Mathews agreed to. The vote was nine in favor, four opposed, and one abstention.

Following the JPA meeting, The First Church in Jamaica Plain created an invitation for a community listening session regarding the burial ground. The listening session will take place via Zoom on Thursday, July 29 at 7pm.

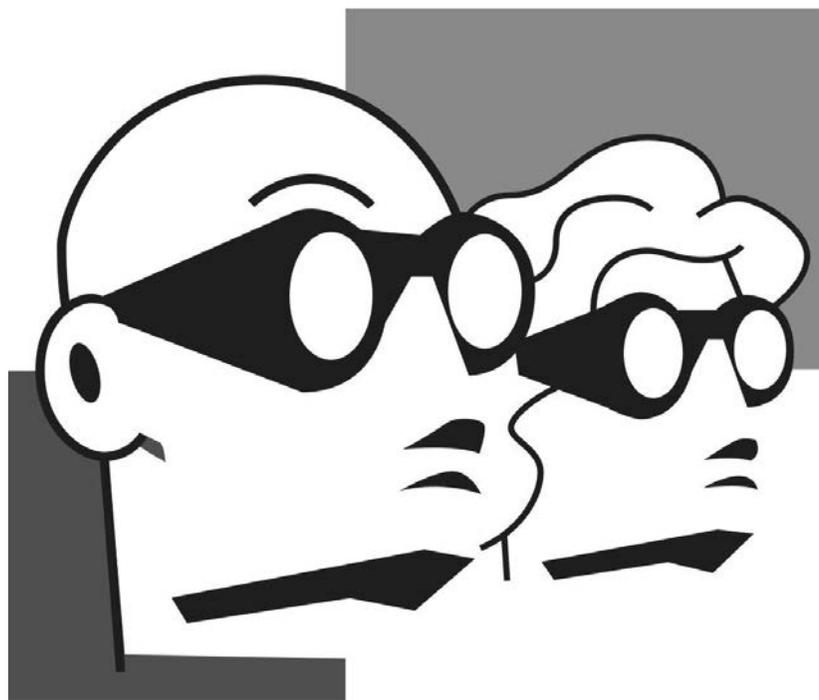
"The purpose of the meeting will be to solicit community feedback on community use of our burying ground," the invitation reads. "Please join us as we cultivate community and gather information for the Governing Board to utilize going forward."

757 CENTRE ST.

At the June JPA meeting, the owner of the Dunkin' at 757 Centre St. proposed to make some changes to the building, including adding a takeout win-

Continued on page 11

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NEWS BRIEFS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT THE BASILICA

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All children are invited to participate in the Grade K-10 classes.

Classes will meet from 10:00-11:00am on Sundays beginning September 19.

The Registration Fee is \$50 per child. Registration forms are available at the Rectory Office.

ANNUAL BOOK SALE COMING TO CONNOLLY LIBRARY

The Friends of the Connolly Library are gearing up for their Annual Book Sale. The date will be September 18 with a rain date on September 19. Volunteers are needed next month. If you have books to donate, please drop them off during regular library hours at 443 Centre St. The Library is open Mondays from noon until 8 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call 617-522-1960 for more information.

JP CHESS AT LORING-GREENOUGH HOUSE

On Thursday, July 22 from 6-8 pm at Loring-Greenough House was the first gathering of JP Chess. All are welcome. The chess will be outside of the house on the grass where tables and seats will be provided as well as a number of chess sets. This gathering is weather permitting. There will be no gathering if there is bad weather.

This will be a weekly event, depending on weather.

Adnani Johari, CPA, CGMA, MBA, named director to Board of Mass. Society of CPAs

STAFF REPORT

The Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants (MSCPA) today announced that Adnani Johari, CPA, CGMA, MBA, was elected to the board of directors for its 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Johari, a Jamaica Plain resident, is a vice president of Brighthouse Investment Advisers, LLC (BIA), a member of the BIA Valuation Committee and an assistant treasurer of the Brighthouse Funds. Brighthouse Investment Advisers, LLC is a registered investment adviser that provides investment management services to the Brighthouse Funds. The MSCPA board of directors is a group of 19 elected members that sets policies, manages programs and oversees activities that benefit the 11,000-member organization and accounting profession in Massachusetts.

"The MSCPA's board of directors are a remarkable diverse group of individuals who play a vital role in shaping the priorities of the Society and truly want to better the profession," said Amy Pitter, president and CEO of the MSCPA. "I am thrilled to have Adnani on the board and

know that his leadership will contribute greatly to the Society, community and the profession in the year ahead." Johari has also been a member of the Brighthouse Financial Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council since 2018. Prior to joining Brighthouse Investment Advisers, LLC, he was a vice president and financial reporting senior manager in the fund administration division at Brown Brothers Harriman (BBH) where he held various responsibilities, including oversight and production of financial reporting, compliance, and other regulatory items for that firm's mutual fund complexes. Prior to joining BBH, Johari was an audit senior manager at Deloitte LLP in Boston.

About the Massachusetts Society of CPAs: The Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants, Inc. is the state professional association of certified public accountants, representing over 11,000 members in public accounting practice, industry and business, government and education. The Society works to develop and maintain high professional standards and offers a wide array of legislative, technical and referral services to its members.

First Church

Continued from page 10

dow and removing indoor seating and restrooms for customers, but a neighbor came and expressed concerns with the new LED lighting that had been installed on the building. The JPA had asked the owner to come back with a solution for that, but JPA Zoning Committee Chair Kevin Moloney reported at the July meeting that a resolution had been worked out in the meantime, so the JPA voted not to oppose the proposed work.

Jamaica Plain is home to a rich history

Jamaica Plain Historical Society (JPHS.org) is a bountiful resource of local stories, information and imagery



For the Gazette's History Edition, we salute our very own Janet Deegan, Board Member of JPHS

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JP HISTORY

Loring Greenough House offering safe activities for all

BY LAUREN BENNETT

JP's historic Loring Greenough House has plenty of outdoor, socially distanced events planned for the rest of the summer and into the fall. While most of the events themselves are not history-related, they take place outside of the lawn of the historic house.

The Gazette spoke with Lorie Komlyn, who serves on the Loring Greenough House Board of Directors as the Vice President, to learn more about these events.

Last year, the Loring Greenough House had to adapt many of its offerings because of the pandemic, including offering virtual house tours instead of in-person ones.

Komlyn said that they had to start thinking about programming for this summer last winter "when it was unclear how the summer would shape up," so most of the planned activities are outside on the lawn and provide "ways the community could gather outside."

She said there are three different series of events: the first are events centered around gardening, the second is a movie series, and the third is an exercise series.

The gardening series includes monthly events, two of which are upcoming. The first is "The Mother [Nature] of All Trivia" event where attendees can bring their own dinners to enjoy on the lawn while participating in the trivia game.

The questions "will all be related in some way to plants," Komlyn said.

The event will take place on Tuesday, July 27, from 7-9pm. Tickets are free for Loring Greenough House members, and \$5 for non-members.

The second event is a "family-friendly gardening event" that will include activities on the lawn, a scavenger hunt, and a craft station where people can make things like tissue paper flowers.

This event will take place on Sunday, August 22 from 11am-1pm, and is free for all.

Two movies have already been successfully shown as part of the Friday Nights at the Movies series on the lawn, including Made-Up and Miss Juneteenth. Upcoming movies include Some Like It Hot, which is currently sold-out, but there is opportunity for walk-ins and to purchase unclaimed tickets at the event. The movie will be shown at 8pm on Friday, July 30.

Other upcoming movies include Hairspray on August 27 at 8pm and Disney's Raya and the Last Dragon on September 17 at 7pm.

For the exercise series, there are several different kinds of programs offered this summer, including Tai Chi/Qigong, Yoga, and POUND, which uses weighted drumsticks called Ripstix to do a variety of different movements. The schedule for these classes can be found at lor-

ing-greenough.org/house-events.

Komlyn said the exercise series was a great success last summer, so it was brought back and extended for this summer.

"I will say that in September, we will be hosting open studios and we are also hoping to be holding our culminating garden event," Komlyn said, which is called "The Harvest," and will be a pop-up festival that will feature area organizations and merchants who sell plant-related products. There will also be plant-related activities.

"We're hoping for good weather for all remaining events outside," she said.

Additionally, Komlyn said that in the fall, the Loring Greenough House is hoping to host indoor activities again, including a "return to providing the

Continued on page 13



Loring Greenough House ofrece actividades seguras para todos

BY LAUREN BENNETT

La histórica casa Loring Greenough House tiene muchos eventos al aire libre planeados para el resto del verano y principios del otoño. La mayoría tendrá lugar fuera en el jardín de la casa histórica.

Hay tres categorías de even-

tos que se ofrecen simultáneamente: jardinería, películas y ejercicio.

La serie de jardinería incluye un evento de trivia sobre las plantas el 27 de julio, de 7pm a 9pm. Los asistentes pueden

Continued on page 13

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JP HISTORY

Greenough House

Continued from page 12

community with lectures and concerts and other fun things to do.”

Right now, the in-person house tours are paused, but there are several virtual tours that are available for viewing on the Loring Greenough House website. The videos highlight different historical portions of the building.

“We really love continuing to be a resource for the community

to gather,” Komlyn said, “and we hope that people will come and enjoy all of these events.” She added that she hopes people will feel that these events are safe to attend.

Komlyn said that “we are such a diverse and welcoming community” in JP, and she said she “would love to be the place where people can come together for that.”

For more information about the Loring Greenough House and full details for all upcoming events, visit loringgreenough.org.



The Joys and Challenges of the “Sandwich Generation”

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The term Sandwich Generation refers to people who are “sandwiched” between managing a career, caring for their parents, and raising children. Multigenerational caregiving has many advantages, yet it is also demanding. Caregiver Solutions, a program offered by Boston Senior Home Care at no-charge, can help.

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Greenough House

Continued from page 12

traer cena para disfrutar en el jardín. Los boletos son gratuitos para los miembros de Loring Greenough House y \$5 para el público.

Otro evento gratuito de jardinería el 22 de agosto de 11am a 1pm incluirá actividades, una búsqueda del tesoro y una estación de manualidades.

En septiembre, Loring Greenough House realizará un festival llamado The Harvest, que presentará ventas de plantas y actividades relacionadas con las plantas.

Lo siguiente en la serie de películas será Some Like it Hot el 30 de julio a las 8pm, con una oportunidad para visitas sin cita previa. Otras películas incluirán Hairspray el 27 de agosto a las 8pm y Raya y el dragón pasado el 17 de septiembre a las 7pm.

La serie de ejercicios fue un gran éxito el verano pasado, por lo que se volvió a traer y se extendió para este verano. Incluirá Tai Chi/Qigong, yoga y Pound.

“Esperamos que haya buen tiempo para todos los eventos restantes en el exterior”, dijo Lorie Komlyn, vicepresidente de la junta directiva de Loring Greenough House. También espera que las actividades bajo techo puedan reanudarse en otoño.

Han estado en espera debido a la pandemia.

En este momento, los tours de la casa están en pausa, pero hay varios videos en el sitio web de Loring Greenough House que destacan diferentes partes históricas del edificio.

“Realmente nos encanta seguir siendo un recurso para la comunidad”, dijo Komlyn.

Para obtener más información sobre Loring Greenough House y todos los detalles de todos los próximos eventos, visite loringgreenough.org.

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Lessons learned during the pandemic: Community Banking more relevant than ever before

STAFF REPORT

In this pandemic year, the strength of community banks was put to a test.

It was a new ballgame. They had to switch to a remote work environment and adjustments were made to help fuel the success of the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program). TCB The Cooperative Bank, like many local banks, had to work around the clock to serve its customers. But during this year of COVID-19, TCB's CEO John Battaglia said in a recent interview that the company pivoted and thrived - making some new hires and gaining customers through the PPP loan program.

"In the beginning, we had to be flexible and implement some technical operational changes to

better serve our customers, but our first priority was to keep our employees and customers safe," said Battaglia, CEO of TCB. "We adjusted to working more remotely in a very short timeframe while handling record residential lending volume and helping the Federal Government with its paycheck protection program, which provided lifesaving services to small businesses. Fortunately, the strength of our community banking model has never been stronger, and more needed, during a year when larger banks were buying up smaller banking entities and our customers were looking for deeper connections. Community bank offices like ours are deeply involved with their local community. Our clients and local businesses are always at the center of everything

we do," continued Battaglia.

Community banks have long been the backbone of cities across the country. Even though this year proved a challenge to the banking industry as a whole, TCB continued to thrive and worked to meet the commitment to its customers and to solidifying long-term relationships within the communities they serve.

Battaglia said they were able to help business, and also non-profits in the communities they serve - noting they did one PPP loan for a non-profit that helped them when there were no fundraisers allowed. He also said it has helped TCB and other community banks that rely on personal relationships rather than an overabundance of technology.

He said during the pandemic,

it was important to be able to speak with someone that one knew about their business or personal finances and how it would make it through the storm.

"The tech side is great because you can pay bills online and it's convenient," he said. "But if you really need to talk to someone, you have to be able to call someone you know or be able to go to a branch. That's the kind of philosophy we have - you have to be able to do both."

Founded in 1898, The Cooperative Bank (TCB) is a full-service community bank committed to meeting the financial needs of individuals, families and small businesses. Offering up-to-date products, competitive interest rates and the highest quality personalized service TCB has assets totaling \$439 million



TCB Bank's CEO John Battaglia said community banks like TCB have come out of the pandemic gaining customers and trust with existing and new customers.

and provides banking services to over 8,400 customers. TCB has branches in Roslindale, West Roxbury, Charlestown and Jamaica Plain. For more information, please visit www.thecooperativebank.com, or call 617-325-2900.

JPNC Police Procedures subcommittee holds first community listening session

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Police and Police Procedures Subcommittee of the Public Service Committee of the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council held its first community listening session on police and community safety on July 19.

The virtual conversation took the format of breakout rooms on Zoom, where a member of the subcommittee on police facilitated the conversation in each room, and members of the community could share their experiences and ideas about police and community safety in Jamaica Plain.

The three breakout rooms included: Culture of Policing, Accountability and Transparency, and Perception vs. Reality of Police Work.

In the Accountability and Transparency room, Public Service Committee Chair Michael Reiskind talked about things like community policing where the neighborhood has "a lot of interaction with the police" so they have familiarity with each other." He has worked on implementing this in JP since the late 1970s, he said.

He said that the efforts on community policing have "clearly not been working fast enough or adequately enough," and he said that he and others have been "trying to do some more radical reforms of the Boston Police."

Resident Drew Eliot said that he doesn't "see any way right now for police to be accountable" when it comes to things like "salary abuses" and "how they manage their time" and "training."

Reiskind said that the Boston Police Department does "respond to requests" in JP. "But that's not the accountability I think you're talking about," he said. "Their internal affairs department is very opaque and hard to get to."

Louise Johnson, a member of the Public Service Committee, brought up several issues she has noticed with the police department, including stories of those who have abused overtime, and "this is something really wrong that's going on that's very hidden, I think, and there's sort of day-to-day issues," she said.

Shew said that while "they do their best to try and help out," she added that "there certainly are issues there. I think the

accountability is a really deep issue."

Samantha Montano, a member of the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council, brought up issues of the power dynamic between police officers and people in low income communities and communities of color. She said police walk around with a "gun," and a "stick." She said that "some folks more than others" are "susceptible" to this type of power dynamic.

My'Kel McMillen reported back on the Culture of Policing breakout room, saying that the group talked about some improvements that could happen within the police department. A topic that kept coming up is the hot dog nights at the Mildred C. Hailey apartments, where the police show up and talk with residents.

McMillen said that Gert Thorn, a member of the JPNC, said that he does not feel these interactions with the police are genuine ways for them to connect with the community.

Another resident said she feels that the hot dog nights are a good event for police to come to as "their faces are needed," and

this gives them an opportunity to talk with residents.

Louise Johnson said that "the police have a huge impact on community and the way that policing is done," adding "especially if they're set up to act in isolation. It can be very devastating on a community."

Johnson also talked about the fact that police and fire often all show up together and it can be "intimidating" for residents to handle that. She said it is a "hard way for a community to live all the time."

Montano also brought up disparities in income among residents, and the fact that "many low income folks" and residents of color deal with mental or physical illnesses as well.

"Wealthier folks don't have to deal with pressure of being watched or controlled," she said.

She also mentioned the fact that many community service officers are people of color in the Jamaica Plain area, and those who work with youth in the JP neighborhood are "representative of their community and that's nice," she said.

Kathryn Duarte mentioned all of the violence in the city

and that she believes something needs to be done about it.

This conversation was one of at least a couple, and will help the subcommittee and the community learn more about each other and what they feel needs to be done about public safety and policing in Jamaica Plain.

Before another conversation is held in the fall, a Google Form has been created for residents to fill out to provide feedback.

Additionally, feedback from the listening session will be included in a "Community Safety Values Statement," according to Subcommittee on Police Procedures member Paige Sparks, "which will serve as a guiding document for continued work." The subcommittee also encourages new members to join the subcommittee.

The form can be found at docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS-dCbmSaiiFjUIWAHIZYMF-b1LHpBxr6aKnYJ-M3HkCl-Rg6_ong/viewform. Questions and comments can also be sent to Paige Sparks at ksparks@bu.edu.

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Teaching Kitchen

Continued from page 1

to help members of the community, including the Teaching Kitchen program.

The Gazette sat down with Teaching Kitchen Program Manager Allison Sequeira to learn about the program and what it offers.

The Teaching Kitchen program is a “free 12-week hands-on food service job-training program for individuals facing barriers to full-time employment,” according to a press release from Community Servings.

Sequeira said that Community Servings has a “history of employing a lot of people looking for a second, third, or 18th chance,” and the team looks for people who are “super committed” and “thankful for an opportunity to work hard.”

A goal of the program is to have participants become gainfully hired in the food service industry. Though not every grad-

uate can be hired full time by Community Servings, “at this point, about half our permanent kitchen staff are graduates of the program,” Sequeira said.

The 47th Teaching Kitchen class commenced their experience last week, and they will learn kitchen basics such as knife skills, reading recipes, measuring ingredients, and how to generally move about a commercial kitchen.

Participants will also learn different cooking techniques for various kinds of proteins, as well as how to prepare bakery items, she said.

“The culinary piece is the biggest piece of the program,” Sequeira said, but participants are also taught about nutrition from Community Servings’ on-site nutrition team, as well as financial empowerment classes in partnership with the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JPND).

Participants receive “one on one financial coaching,” along with education in digital literacy.



Marva Hynton, a current Teaching Kitchen Trainee, operates the machine that seals some of the medically-tailored meals prepared fresh by Community Servings each day.

People learn how to work with computers as well as participate in mock interviews and receive assistance with resume writing. They also practice talking about the industry so they are “ready to see themselves as permanent employed individuals,” Sequeira said.

“Most days, they’re in the kitchen,” she said of the employees. They also get a lunch break where lunch is served and folks can chat with one another.

Three mornings a week, the trainees work with the full time chefs and learn about the different aspects of creating the 3,000 medically-tailored, from-scratch meals that are prepared daily on site.

“It’s a really cool thing to put on their resumes,” she said. Participants also receive ServSafe certification as part of the program, she added.

“This is an overwhelming time commitment for many of them,” Sequeira said, and the program is now split into two different phases to mark a sense of accomplishment for trainees. The second phase has a slight increase in hours from the first.

As a new benefit to the program, eligible trainees will be able to receive a wage for all hours worked through Community Servings payroll, “thanks in part to generous support from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center’s Community-based Health Initiative funds, which were recently awarded to the agency as part of a three-year, \$500,000 Focused Investment Grant aimed at addressing job and financial security in the community,” according to the press release.

“Our goal there was to increase access and retention,” Sequeira said, as many people

cannot afford to leave their minimum wage jobs to participate in this program.

Aside from eventual employment, Sequeira said that “I hope that people gain self-confidence and a sense of hope...” as well as “gain a community that they feel supported by. Those are more significant than even the job.”

The program is now accepting new participants on a rolling basis, and the next set of classes start on September 13.

Additionally, Community Servings is always looking for more partners and social service agencies to work with, Sequeira said.

“If someone wants to come talk to us and talk about a referral partnership, we’re all ears,” Sequeira said.

The Teaching Kitchen has been a huge help and a positive experience for many of its participants, including Jermaine McNeill.

McNeill graduated from the Teaching Kitchen program in 2011, and now works as a full time chef at Community Servings.

“The program, it did wonders for me,” McNeill said. “It helped me out tremendously.”

He said when he participated in the program, he had just earned his GED and had become a new dad.

“I was going through a lot,” he said, adding that he is “grateful for the program and the lessons and the things that it taught me.”

McNeill said that he got a call from Community Servings about a year ago to come back and work in the kitchen, right after he had gotten laid off from his previous job as a food service director.

He said he was “figuring out what my next move was going to be,” but the offer was a “blessing; it was at a good time.”

He started out as a temporary employee, but was asked to stay long-term.

Every day from 7-3, McNeill comes in, looks at the day’s menu, and gets to work making two or three recipes. He said he prefers to work on his own, as he likes to have three freedom to learn from his own mistakes.

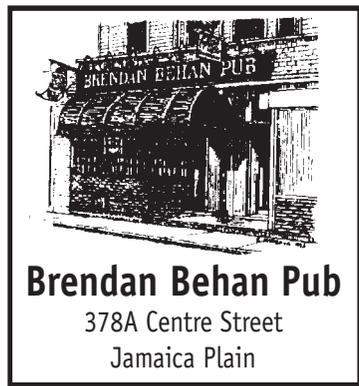
He also said he enjoys conversing with the Teaching Kitchen class and taking them under his wing, giving them advice and being a shoulder for them to lean on.

McNeill said he knows what it’s like to be a new person in a situation, so he tries to make the trainees as comfortable as possible and “make myself available” to them.

“I always wanted to work in food,” he said. “I didn’t take it serious until I got older. I realized I could be good at it.” He worked as a dishwasher when he was younger, and moved his way up the ladder, always looking for ways to learn new things.

“It’s been a long journey to this point,” McNeill said. “I’m grateful and blessed.”

For more information on Community Servings and the Teaching Kitchen, visit servings.org.



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Community Servings volunteers work quickly and carefully to prepare food bags in the kitchen.

Delayed by the pandemic, grand opening celebration finally held for Hattie Kelton Apartments

BY LAUREN BENNETT

More than two dozen of activist Hattie Kelton's extended family members, some of whom came from across the country, gathered at the Hattie Kelton Apartments at 61 Heath St. on July 17 to celebrate the grand opening of the 47 unit affordable housing building.

State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, State Rep. Nika Elugardo, and City Councilor Matt O'Malley were also in attendance.

"Today we are very happy to be finally celebrating the completion of the Hattie Kelton Apartments," said JPNDC Board Co-Chair John Fitzgerald.

"It started more than 20 years ago with a community planning process about how do we claim by and for the community dozens of vacant lots in this neighborhood, after a history of unwelcome institutional expansion, arson, and dumping."

Hattie Kelton, who passed away in 1998, lived at the Mil-dred C. Hailey apartments (then called Bromley-Heath) when she moved to Boston from Virginia in 1954, then moved to Lawn St. after her husband passed away in 1967, according to the JPNDC. She co-founded the Martha Elliot Health Center, as well as a founding member of the Back



Hattie Kelton's extended family, along with the JPNDC, Back of the Hill CDC, Rep. Nika Elugardo, Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, and Councilor Matt O'Malley, helped to cut the ribbon signifying the official opening of the Hattie Kelton Apartments at 61 Heath St. on July 17.

of the Hill Community Development Corporation.

"Hattie spent countless hours doing everything from meeting with neighbors and elected officials to marching and picketing in Boston and as far away as the White House," according to the JPNDC.

The event was delayed a year because of the pandemic, but 47 families were officially welcomed into their units as part of the celebration. Construction was completed in December of 2019, and residents were selected via

a lottery organized by the City. Residents began moving into their units in the spring of last year.

The Hattie Kelton Apartments were developed by the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JPNDC) in partnership with the Back of the Hill Community Development Corporation.

The units are between 0 and 70% of the Area Median Income, and the 47 units are comprised of 14 three-bedroom units, 22 two

Continued on page 18

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-Councilor Kenzie Bok





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Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll

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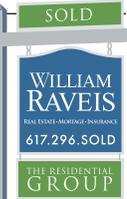
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JP Progressives endorse three candidates for Boston City Council At Large

STAFF REPORT

Jamaica Plain Progressives has voted to endorse incumbent Julia Mejia and challengers David Halbert and Ruthzee Louijeune in the race for Boston City Council At Large.

JPP is excited by our endorsed candidates' individual platforms as well as their collective commitment to progressive ideas and policies. We look forward to seeing what these candidates and the 2022 Boston City Council will do, and we will be there, supporting policies that move our city toward greater equity and justice.

Julia Mejia has been an unapologetic and tireless champion of progressive causes in her first term as city councilor. After her stunning one-vote win, she and her office went to work, with a particular focus on the issues confronting low-income communities in Boston. She is serving as Chair of the Committee on Civil Rights and the Committee of Small Business and Workforce Development. In that role, she and her team created culturally responsive food access projects to support small businesses and feed our most vulnerable, as well as a COVID business readiness program to build capacity for Black, Brown,

and immigrant-owned barbers and hairstylists. Her office has also designed and implemented a community-centered civic engagement model to address city-wide quality of life concerns and filed legislation to improve access and accountability in city government. Julia has wielded her focus, persistence, and grassroots organizing skills to make sure all of Boston's communities have a seat at the table, particularly working-class communities of color. She has brought energy and passion to the Council this term, despite the incredible difficulties of learning a job and building an office in the midst of a global

pandemic, and we agree she has more than earned a second term.

David Halbert first ran for City Council in 2019 and received our endorsement then. David has come back stronger than ever and is delivering a more effective message, grounded in the same values. He combines progressive ideas and how different policy areas intersect with one another, which has led to his proposals for solutions that speak to the systemic and institutional change we need in government. He has the background as well as the skill and expertise to bring these changes into practice. As a former staffer for former City Councilor Sam Yoon, David has a deep understanding of how City Council can act to make positive change in our city. His work and experiences span the city, from East Boston Main Streets to his home in Mattapan. He is also a BPS parent and is committed to education equity for all students in the City. In addition to the importance of his experience and ideas, David would be the first Black man elected city-wide in 40 years. David will be a thoughtful, honest, and consistent progressive councilor.

Ruthzee Louijeune is the

daughter of Haitian immigrants and was born and raised in Boston and attended Boston Public Schools. While a student at Harvard Law School, she volunteered with Project No One Leaves and was Co-Director of the Eviction Clinic at the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, providing legal assistance for individuals facing evictions and representing them in Boston Housing Court. She is currently a lawyer and advocate who works with the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance. In addition to her work on housing issues, she created a program called Each One Teach One, which mentors young Haitian immigrants. She also worked at the Posse Foundation, a nonprofit working on expanding access, equity, and meritocracy in education. Ruthzee served as Senior Counsel on Senator Elizabeth Warren's presidential and Senate campaigns and she has been endorsed by both Senator Warren and by Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz. Ruthzee will be a great addition to the Boston City Council. Several times during our candidate forum other candidates responded "I agree with Ruthzee," as do we.

Winnie Eke joins race for District 6 City Council

BY LAUREN BENNETT

West Roxbury resident Winnie Eke has joined Mary Tamer and Kendra Hicks in the race for District 6 City Council. Kelly Ransom announced her withdrawal from the race in late June.

Eke came to the United States from Nigeria, and first lived in Texas before moving to Boston

in the mid 1980s.

Eke said what she loves most about District 6 is that "it's a very good area to raise children," and "it is quiet; it is safe." She said she appreciates the caring nature of her neighbors, who were always around to help take care of her seven daughters.

She said she wants to run for City Council because as a former Boston Public Schools teacher, "I had students who didn't have

homes, who came to school not fed, with nothing for lunch."

She added that in her personal experience, complaints about things like roads and streets have not been addressed, so she would like to be on the City Council to ensure those types of concerns are addressed.

"Inequality is really what

Continued on page 19

Counter Intelligence

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Hattie Kelton

Continued from page 17

bedroom units, and 11 one bedroom units. The apartments are located a quarter mile away from the Jackson Square T station, and the units were constructed according to LEED and Energy Star standards, according to a press release from JPND.

There are two units for clients of the Mass. Dept. of Developmental Services, and five units for formerly homeless individuals along with resident services.

The building also features a community room and 20 parking spaces.

"Displacement and gentrification had to go through Miss Hattie...and it is such a wonderful legacy to see her here recognized today for her work," Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz said at the celebration, "and I want to see more and more women of color lifted up and celebrated in this way over the years in the community."

State Rep Nika Elugardo said

that "Miss Hattie is a legend in this neighborhood that I have the joy of representing...celebrating Miss Hattie is celebrating the heritage and soul of Mission Hill, which is embodied in you all, embodied in the family, embodied in the elected officials."

The event culminated in a ribbon cutting with Hattie Kelton's family members, elected officials, and project partners, as well as a presentation of the plaque that will hang in the apartment building lobby. Other speakers included Dan Rivera, President and CEO of MassDevelopment, Richard Giordano of the Back of the Hill CDC, resident leader Willie Mitchell, and Andrew Earl Kelton, Jr.

"Every time we hand someone the keys to a beautiful new home, it's one small victory," JPND CEO Teronda Ellis said in a statement. "It's tremendously gratifying to know that 47 families who are priced out of Boston's housing market are making their home here in Jamaica Plain because of the Hattie Kelton Apartments."

Winnie Eke

Continued from page 18

the city.

“Those have prepared me to be able to advocate and also promote policies that can help the whole system and the city move forward in terms of helping everyone,” Eke said.

When it comes to affordable housing in the district, Eke said it is “an issue.” She said she believes the wants and needs of residents should be taken into serious consideration. “We shouldn’t have a city where the government imposes its will on the people,” she said. “I am sure that everybody, including myself, want affordable housing,” but she said that it needs to be done in a way that reflects the desires of the community it’s being built in.

On the subject of helping small business owners in the wake of the pandemic, particularly those who are women or people of color, Eke said “we need an advocacy office in the City of Boston in every district.”



Candidate for District 6 Boston City Council Winnie Eke.

She said that funding and staff should be available specifically to assist small businesses who need help to “reestablish themselves” or to expand.

Eke said she believes the top issues in the district are education, environmental issues, and affordable housing.

She said people in West Roxbury and the district as a whole “love to walk around; love the parks. I think we need to make

sure we take care of our parks.”

Additionally, she said that parents want to know that their neighborhood is clean and that roads are safe.

Eke also talked about her plan for transportation, saying that she doesn’t believe completely free transportation is the way to go.

“That is equality, but it’s not equity,” she said, adding that she doesn’t believe someone who makes \$90,000 a year should have free transportation when there are maintenance issues to take care of.

“How do we pay to repair the system?” she asked. “As much as I would like to agree that we all have free transportation,” she said, “we have to be realistic.”

She suggested that people would obtain transportation vouchers according to their income level.

So far, Eke has been working to build out her campaign and trying to meet with the commu-

nity “so people know who I am,” she said. She said people have also been helping her with her campaign, as she started late. She also said she is trying to attend community events, and spoke at the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association meeting last week. She said she has been learning more and more about the many different issues and perspectives in the district.

“When people see me, they’re kind of surprised that I’m the person running,” she said, adding that “West Roxbury is primarily a white area...when they see me, they’re not used to seeing a Black woman running in West Roxbury in District 6. I get to introduce myself. People are welcoming, but...I hope I’m not going to be the only minority person running in West Roxbury.”

For more information about Winnie Eke and her campaign, visit winnieekeforcouncil.com.

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Coming to a Home Near You:

Sheffield Chamber players look to expand in various living rooms, foyers and apartments

BY SETH DANIEL

The Sheffield Chamber Orchestra has entered into an aggressive five-year plan to bring new music to audiences in JP and across Boston, but the premieres might be a little closer to home than one might imagine.

Sheffield - boasting several members from JP, as well as Executive Director Christine English being from JP - announced this month that they have commissioned new work to premiere over the next five years from five of the hottest new composers in the country.

The exciting part is it could be in your living room.

That's because Sheffield's unique hook is that they recruit hosts in JP and other neighborhoods in Boston, and then roll out intimate string chamber concerts in homes and small spaces. Since 2014 they've been quietly playing in backyards and foyers, and now they're looking to up their profile and find new people to host their plethora of upcoming performances.

"It's inspired by the old tradition of how Chamber music came into the world," said Sasha

Callahan, of JP. "Originally, this music was heard in salons of people's homes and that's how a lot of the great repertoire was first heard in that way. We're reviving that tradition, but maybe in a more democratic way because anyone really can host... It's a very intimate and visual experience. The feedback from audiences is that they enjoy seeing us breath and communicate and to be able to experience the music up close. It's very different than going to a concert hall. We hear a lot of people tell us they don't like Classical music, but they loved the Haydn piece we played at their house. When you present Classical music on this scale, people will come to it and not worry about what they don't know. Because of that, we've grown very rapidly."

Said English, "Much of the great Classical music, all of that was heard and happened in the space of a home. This is two things - music by musicians of the highest caliber, but in houses that feel real to us... This will be unique because these are living composers we've commissioned and we can ask them questions. You can't ask Mozart what he meant by measure three, but you can ask a living composer what



PHOTOS BY HANNAH SHIELDS.

Left to right: Megumi Stohs Lewis (of JP), Leo Eguchi, Sasha Callahan (of JP), and Alexander Vavilov.

he or she meant when they composed measure three. There is all of this interpretation we can do here that with traditional music we can't do now."

Sheffield is prolific in its touring and plays hosted concerts at a pace of at least 40 per year. Now, they have a wonderful problem in that they've commissioned composers Osvaldo Glijov, Kevin Day, Jessie Montgomery and Kenji Bunch and a fifth to be named later, and they need more places to roll out the new work. These living composers will be producing new music through 2027 for Sheffield to premiere in its repertoire of intimate musical settings.

"This is a major leap in confidence and growth for our young organization, and a great honor

to commission these talented composers," said Executive Director English. "This initiative helps us contribute to the rich history of new chamber music in a way that reflects the world we live in. This is possible because of the support and encouragement of our equally ambitious and visionary board."

English said they are now trying to expand beyond their existing base of hosts and audiences.

"With that expansion of music, we want to expand our base so we have more audience members and hosts and more people to hear the music," she said. "We have a solid base built on word-of-mouth. We're really trying to expand beyond that and we want other areas of Greater Boston

and Boston to get involved and let people know who we are."

Callahan said hosting is not as complex as one might think. She said she's played in tiny apartments with people squeezed into couches and sitting on stairways, and also in large living rooms with room for folding chairs - and has also played in backyards and gardens too. Most times, if one wants to become a host, a member of Sheffield will come to take a look at the space and figure out if it's right for them and how a concert could take place. Typically, the host can invite those they wish to attend the concert, and the remaining attendees would come from the strong base of supporters that Sheffield already has. Typically a concert would have 25 to 30 audience members.

"It's a very peaceful experience for everyone," she said. "It's very nourishing for the musicians and the composers and I think our audiences feel that way too."

Sheffield rolled out its 2021-2022 Season offerings earlier this month to organizational supporters, and began its annual "host drive," aimed at regional music enthusiasts who want to bring the group's music to their homes or other intimate spaces. The Sheffield Chamber Players' 2021-2022 Season includes two Fall and two Spring programs that will be offered to hosts and played in other intimate locations.

Fall 2021

PROGRAM 1:

- W.A. Mozart -- String Quintet No. 5 in D Major
- Kenji Bunch -- *String Circle*
- Leonora Duarte -- Sinfonias 3, 4 & 5

PROGRAM 2:

- L.v. Beethoven -- String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat major, Op. 74 (*Harp*)
- D. Shostakovich -- String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat major, Op. 74

Spring 2022

PROGRAM 3:

- Germaine Tailleferre -- String Quartet
- Robert Schumann -- String Quartet No. 2 in F, Op. 41
- Kevin Day -- String Quartet (Prem.)

PROGRAM 4:

- W.A. Mozart -- Clarinet Quintet
- Evan Ziporyn -- *Be-In*
- Julia Wolfe -- *Four Marys*
- L.v. Beethoven, Osvaldo Golijov -- *Two Bagatelles*

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Court.
Date: June 21, 2021
Felix D. Arroyo
Register of Probate

7/23/21
JP

EDITORIAL

Not vaccinated? COVID-19 will get you -- and your family

When we were writing about COVID-19 last year at the height of the pandemic, we often put it this way: COVID-19 is a hunter and we, the human animal, are its prey.

In the summer of 2021, another way to think about it is this: COVID-19 is a microscopic version of the alien monsters in the popular sci-fi movies *A Quiet Place* or *The Tomorrow War* in which the aliens have invaded Earth and are seeking to exterminate the human race.

In both of those films, the humans have banded together to fight the aliens in order to avoid extinction.

In particular, the heroes in those movies do whatever they can to protect their families.

However, unlike in the movies, many of the humans on our planet, especially here in the United States, are not acting with the same degree of rationality and unity in fighting COVID-19.

Virus infections and hospitalizations are rising sharply across the United States thanks to the Delta variant, an updated version of the virus, that is both more transmissible and causes more serious disease.

However, as President Biden succinctly put it, the new surge in cases is occurring almost entirely among those who are not vaccinated.

More than 160 million Americans have received vaccinations, roughly half of the country. However, the vaccination rate varies widely depending upon the geographic region. In the Northeast and the West Coast, vaccination rates are in the range of 70 percent, compared to under 40 percent in large areas of the South and middle of the country.

Predictably, the increase in infections, hospitalizations, and deaths are surging in those under-vaccinated areas. The numbers don't lie. It was reported last week that the seven-day moving average of new COVID-19 cases across the country increased by 16%, but that 93% of those cases were among counties with low vaccination rates. In states with high vaccination rates, new infections are occurring almost solely among the unvaccinated. In the state of Maryland, which has a high vaccination rate, 99% of new COVID cases are occurring in persons who are not vaccinated.

The Delta variant that is now prevalent in the U.S. and across the globe is more than twice as transmissible as the original version of COVID-19. Fortunately, all three of the vaccines being used in this country (Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J) are highly-effective against infection by the Delta variant.

In addition, we have more than enough of the vaccine to inoculate every American against this dreaded disease. America is the richest country in the world and we have used our wealth to encourage the development and production of vaccines and to purchase a supply sufficient to immunize every American.

The incredible success in developing successful vaccines has been the equivalent of a 21st century Manhattan Project, which was the scientific effort to develop the nuclear bomb that eventually ended World War II.

So why are so many of our fellow citizens hesitant to get the vaccine? President Biden noted that misinformation -- and outright disinformation -- on social media platforms are killing people. He also should have added that disinformation campaigns on certain so-called mainstream news networks similarly are contributing to vaccine hesitancy.

If you are relying on your Facebook friends or some other on-line (or mainstream news network) to persuade you from getting the vaccine, then you are a victim of bad information that can harm you and your families.

In short, the simple -- but brutal -- truth is this: If you and your loved ones are not vaccinated, it is inevitable that COVID-19 will find you, just like those science-fiction aliens in the movies. And just like the movies, for all too many of the unvaccinated, the outcome will be deadly.

OP-ED

Showing up for our aging residents

BY COUNCILOR ANNISSA ESSAIBI
GEORGE, CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR

This past year and a half has been devastating for so many, and with that has come a long list of changes and priorities that the City of Boston must address. But perhaps voices too often left out of these critical policy conversations belong to Boston's aging residents.

Here in Boston, it is projected that 20% of our population will be age 65 or older within 15 years. It's essential that our policies reflect this and that any future planning includes measures that make our city welcoming, accessible and inclusive of our aging residents.

We must prioritize housing. Our aging residents decided to call Boston home. Many raised their families here, worked here, and have become a part of the fabric of their community. They need affordable housing options: we must build senior-specific rental units, provide them options to downsize within their own neighborhood, and lower skyrocketing property taxes that have taken many residents by surprise. Good planning will allow us to create and maintain greenspaces, open space ideal for community gatherings, and make Boston truly accessible for all with more ramps, smooth sidewalks, and benches.

Our residents need transportation options that are close to

their homes and go to and from local senior and community centers, community health centers and hospitals, places of worship, and to the grocery stores and pharmacies. By expanding shuttle services and providing free MBTA passes, we can provide our older residents the resources and tools to be mobile and lead healthy, happy and enriched lives.

As part of my public health plan, I lay out the important role community health centers (CHCs) play in our city. In addition to providing primary care, CHCs provide comprehensive community services to address food insecurity, housing instability, behavioral health, immigration support, and other social determinants of health. Mental health services, in particular, will be key in the coming months after a year and a half or more in isolation with the added stressful burdens of living through a global pandemic. Our neighborhood community health centers can be a critical link between our aging residents and the services they need to lead healthy lives.

As Mayor, I will support and strengthen the lives of older individuals in Boston by ensuring that we are intentional about addressing their needs and improving their quality of life in our policies and initiatives. I'll make bold improvements to programs that will optimize the health, safety and inclusion of aging Bostonians, and continue to in-

vest in the generational diversity of our residents by cultivating a safe and healthy community with resources to make Boston an enjoyable place to grow older. To do all of this and ensure older residents use these services, City Hall must make a concerted effort to conduct outreach in a way that reaches, and includes, our seniors. We have to meet them where they are. From door knocking programs to phone calls, mailers to meetings at their local senior center, we have to be on the ground, listen to their needs, and allow what we learn to drive the City of Boston's agenda.

There's no question that Boston is such a special place because of the people who choose to call this city home, who build businesses here, who enrich our neighborhoods and contribute to our communities. So let's make sure we're creating more opportunities for aging residents to stay in them, such as more senior-specific affordable housing, improved and accessible infrastructure, and community-centered care. But even more importantly, let's intentionally engage our older residents in every aspect of these policies so that all voices have the opportunity to shape our city's future—I think we could all learn a thing or two.

Annisssa Essaibi-George is a Boston City Councilor and candidate for Mayor of Boston.

ParkARTS neighborhood concerts, golf course concerts begin July 21

STAFF REPORT

Live music offerings return in 2021 with a series of summer evening concerts

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department's 2021 ParkARTS Citywide Neighborhood Concert Series offers musical entertainment in local parks from July 21 through August 12, as well as a series of summer evening concerts on the patios at the City of Boston's two golf course clubhouses from July 21 through September 1.

The ParkARTS outdoor neighborhood summer concerts and golf course concerts are made possible by presenting sponsor Bank of America. Concerts at William J. Devine clubhouse are offered with support from the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, reflecting Franklin Park's location within Boston's historic Emerald Necklace system of parks.

The ParkARTS Citywide Neighborhood Concert Series begins on Wednesday, July 21, with The Woo Factor at Almont Park, 40 Almont Street, Mat-

tapan, and continues Thursday, July 22 with Northeast Groove at Billings Field, 369 LaGrange Street, West Roxbury; Wednesday, July 28 with the Soul City Band at Dorchester Park, 2180 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester; and Thursday, July 29 with Tom Petty tribute band The Rebels at Medal of Honor Park, 775 East First Street, South Boston.

The August schedule kicks off with Veronica Robles on Wednesday, August 4, at LoPresti Park,

Continued on page 23

BPHC announce West Nile Virus-positive mosquito sample found in JP

STAFF REPORT

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) announced last week that West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected in mosquitoes in Boston for the first time this year.

The presence of WNV was confirmed July 16 by the Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory in a mosquito sample collected on July 14, 2020 in Jamaica Plain. No human or animal cases of WNV or Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) have been detected so far this year in the City of Boston. Although there is no elevated risk level

or risk-level change associated with this finding, BPHC advises residents to prevent mosquito bites and to mosquito-proof their homes.

“It is typical to find West Nile Virus in mosquitoes in Boston at this time of year,” said Dr. Sarimer Sanchez, Director of the Infectious Disease Bureau at the Boston Public Health Commission. “However, it is also that time of year when many of us will be spending time outdoors, enjoying summertime in New England. When you or your family are outside, it is important that you take steps to prevent mosquito bites. That includes using

an approved mosquito repellent, draining standing water from your yard and repairing window screens to keep mosquitos out of your home.”

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a rare but serious disease most often spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. WNV has been detected in Boston mosquitoes during the summer and fall months (June – November) every year since 2000, but WNV in people is rare. In 2020 and 2019, there were no human cases of WNV infection diagnosed in Boston residents. In 2018, there were seven human cases of WNV infection diagnosed in Boston

residents.

While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe disease. Most people infected with WNV will have no symptoms. When present, WNV symptoms tend to include fever and flu-like illness. In rare cases, more severe illness can occur. There is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatments for West Nile Virus infection. The most effective way to avoid WNV is to take measures to prevent mosquito bites.

Mosquitoes in Boston are most active from dusk to dawn during the months of July to

September, but mosquitoes can spread disease until the first hard frost (as late as November). The risk can be reduced by using insect repellent when outdoors, especially from dusk to dawn and, when possible, wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants. Residents should also make sure that their window and door screens are in good repair to prevent mosquitoes from getting inside. To help prevent mosquitoes from breeding, BPHC advises residents to empty standing water from flowerpots, gutters, buckets, pool covers, pet water dishes, discarded tires, and bird-baths on a regular basis.

State Rep. Nika Elugardo endorses Mayor Kim Janey

STAFF REPORT

Saying her victory “will set the progressive movement on fire,” State Representative Nika Elugardo on July 19 enthusiastically endorsed Mayor Kim Janey in the 2021 Boston mayoral race.

“I enthusiastically endorse Kim Janey for Mayor because her victory will set the progressive movement on fire in the most disenfranchised neighborhoods of our city,” stated Representative Elugardo. “As a City Councilor and now as Mayor, Kim Janey has been a passionate, pro-gressive leader on issues ranging from jobs and economic development, to reimagining policing, to ensuring equity in exam schools. In a field lush with political prowess and progressive credibility, the Janey candidacy presents a once-in-a-lifetime

opportunity that mobilizes the genius of a generation of BIPOC residents in the poorest, Blackest and most politically marginalized parts of Boston — including Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan. If elected to a full term, Mayor Janey will continue to center the seat of power among the most disenfranchised and, in so doing, will unleash the pent up progressive force that is ripe and ready to transform Boston.”

“I am so proud and grateful to have earned the support of my proud, progressive sister-in-service Representative Nika Elugardo,” said Mayor Janey. “Long before being elected to office, Nika was fighting for those who have too often been shut out of the halls of power. She has brought her passion and brilliance to the State House on behalf of marginalized communities in Boston, quickly becoming

an effective, respected and vital voice on Beacon Hill for racial, social and economic justice in Boston and beyond.”

Representative Nika Elugardo represents the 15th Suffolk District, which includes Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill, Roslindale and Brookline. She has over 25 years of experience in community and economic development with public, private and non-profit leaders, especially in BIPOC communities. As a State Representative, she continues her mission to expand the power and voice of people historically marginalized — from incarcerated activists, to public housing residents, to immigrant and BIPOC leaders.

She is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and Boston University Law School.

ParkARTS

Continued from page 22

33 Sumner Street, East Boston; Thursday, August 5, with the Soul City Band at Smith Playground, 235 Western Avenue, Allston; and Wednesday, August 11, with Jah Spirit Reggae at Horatio Harris Park, 58 Beech Glen Street, Roxbury. The series ends on Thursday, August 12, with Joaquin Santos at Blackstone Square, 1530 Washington Street, South End. Shows in neighborhood parks begin at 7 p.m.

ParkARTS golf course performances are offered on alternating Wednesdays on the clubhouse patios of the William J. Devine Golf Course (1 Circuit Dr, Dorchester) and George Wright Golf Course (420 West St, Hyde Park) throughout July and August and into September: the Jamaica Plain Saxophone Quartet will perform on July 21 at Franklin Park; It's a J Thing on Wednesday, July 28 at George Wright; Shane Wood Jazz Trio on August 4 at Franklin Park; Mike Tarara on August 11 at George Wright; Andres Guerra on August 18 at Franklin Park; Woun-

dikin on August 25 at George Wright; and wrapping up with The Pat Gaulin Trio on September 1 at Franklin Park. All golf course performances begin at 6:00 pm.

All ParkARTS performances are free of charge. For more information, please call (617) 635-4505 or visit Boston.gov/ParkARTS. Stay up to date with news, events, and design and construction work in Boston parks by signing up for our email list at bit.ly/Get-Parks-Emails and follow our social channels @bostonparksdept on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

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